

Introduction

The Communications Technology Link of the Comprehensive Plan examines the issues associated with the planning, provision, and access to communications technology services in the City of Kerrville. Communications technology means the public utilities that include uses voice, data, information and entertainment. This element partially reflects goals and objectives addressed in the Land Use and Utilities Elements.

This Link will provide the framework for specific plans and programs. Here, the City of Kerrville may mean the community itself, the City Council, or other agencies. The Kerrville City Council is specifically described as the City Council as it pertains to any proposed ordinances and regulations. Because communications technologies are always advancing, the Communications Technology element should be reviewed every five years to ensure that it reflects the evolution of the industry.

The Communications Technology Link consists of two parts:

1. Issues regarding communications technology; and
2. Goals, objectives, policies and action statements.

Issues

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) identified the following issues:

1. **The installation of communication towers.** This includes proper design and siting guidelines for communications towers— whether in public rights of way or in visible locations in the community. The City can work with communications technology providers to reduce “visual pollution” within the community and on surrounding hills and ridgelines. The City can also encourage sharing of infrastructure among wireline and wireless providers.
2. **The provision of communication technologies.** The City can assist new communication technologies through city regulations.
3. **The City’s presence on the Internet.** Increasing the City’s presence on the Internet means expanding the City’s role in providing information electronically.
4. **Residential Use of communications technologies.** The City can assist residential development for communications technologies by building codes, inspections and discussions with providers.

The City of Kerrville has six roles to play in the communications technology arena:

1. *The installation of communication towers;*
 2. *The provision of communications technologies*
 3. *The City’s presence on the Internet.*
 4. *Residential Use of communications technologies.*
 5. *Economic use of communications technologies.*
 6. *Communications technologies between residents and businesses.*
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Public utilities include communications technologies, water, wastewater, storm drainage, natural gas, and electricity that use the public right-of-way.



Implementation Ideas:

- *Draft Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance*
 - *Encourage Installation of communications technology infrastructure in new developments*
 - *Provide City Council with Internet and Communications Technology Training*
 - *Explore Expanded Use of the Internet to Promote Kerrville and Local Businesses*
 - *Explore Partnerships with Schools and Libraries*
 - *Promote Communications Technology Applications*
 - *Explore Partnerships to Promote Training*
 - *Explore Expanded Use of the Internet to Provide Government Services for Seniors*
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5. Economic use of communications technologies. Existing and new businesses should be encouraged to use communications technologies for improved economic development. Economic development will become more intertwined with the availability of communications technology.

6. Communications technologies between residents and businesses. Newer residential and commercial areas mean increased availability of communications technologies, and older areas should be improved. The distribution of communication technologies will impact the quality of life.

Goals, Objectives and Action Statements

Goals, objectives, policies and action statements for the Communications Technology Link reflect the identified issues. The following represent a summary of the goals for the Communications Technology element:

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| Goal 6.1: | Adopt policies that minimize unnecessary regulation and costs while maintaining community character and control over the placement of communication towers in visible locations. |
| Goal 6.2: | Encourage and facilitate fair and equitable competition in the provision of communications technology services. |
| Goal 6.3: | Use communications technology to maintain and enhance information resources and services provided to Kerrville citizens. |
| Goal 6.4: | Use communications technology to enhance the lives of Kerrville residents. |
| Goal 6.5: | Promote use of communications technology to enhance the economic vitality of Kerrville. |
| Goal 6.6: | Facilitate the creation of an advanced communications network infrastructure for Kerrville citizens, businesses and industries. |

The following section defines the City's communications technology goals, objectives, policies and action statements related to the issues. Future decisions by the Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Council should be made based on one or more of the community's communications technology goals or objectives.



Goal 6.1: Adopt policies that minimize unnecessary regulation and costs while maintaining community character and control over the placement of communication towers in visible locations.

Objective A: Coordinate communications technology needs with the desire to protect the natural resources, view sheds, and other amenities of Kerrville.

Objective B: Provide actions that are fair to all parties, in compliance with state and federal regulations, and commensurate with regulation of other utility and infrastructure activity in public rights of way and areas.

Policy: *Encourage responsible development of communications towers to protect the environment of Kerrville.*

Action 6.1.1: *Communications towers will be located to protect Kerrville's natural beauty while promoting a state-of-the-art communications technology system.*

- a. The City Council will review all ordinances that regulate the provision of communications technology infrastructure to determine if they also can be used to protect the aesthetic beauty of Kerrville and Kerr County.
- b. The City Council will revise existing regulations that specifically address the site development requirements for new communication towers.

Action 6.1.2: *The City Council will take no actions that will have the effect of prohibiting wireline or wireless communications services.*

- a. All ordinances that are directed at wireline or wireless communications providers shall be fair and equitable to both citizens of Kerrville and the communications providers.
- b. All ordinances prepared to address communications technology issues will be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the Telecommunications Act of 1996.
- c. New communications technology ordinances will be written to ensure that they encourage competition

View sheds mean those areas inside the city limits that provide a scenic vista to motorists or pedestrians.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 means the law that governs the use of communication towers, use of right-of-way, and other uses.



and do not have the effect of promoting one service provider over another.

Action 6.1.3 The City of Kerrville recognizes that wireless communication towers and similar communications technology facilities are a necessary infrastructure component, but it will strive to balance the quality of wireless communication services with aesthetic desires.

The City Council will amend its Zoning Ordinance to regulate the location of communications technology antennas and towers.

- a. The City Council will amend its zoning ordinance to include a section on the regulation of communications technology antennas and towers.
- b. The City Council will prepare written guidelines for communications technology infrastructure that are in agreement with all federal laws, rules and regulations applicable to wireless communications providers.
- c. The City's ordinances will be revised to limit location and height of wireless communication towers and antennas on hillsides and other highly visible locations within the city limits except where the City already has existing large structures such as water storage tanks.
- d. The City will identify areas of special concern, such as areas on hillsides or adjacent to the river, and develop specific guidelines for the provision of communications towers in these areas.

Goal 6.2: Encourage and facilitate fair and equitable competition in the provision of communications technology services.

Objective A: Create a means of monitoring and ensuring access to rights-of-way by all communications technology providers.

Objective B: Establish clear guidelines for the request and review process.

Objective C: Ensure that the review process is timely and efficient.

Objective D: Allow logical placement of communications technology facilities while protecting sensitive and aesthetic areas.

Policy: *Provide an effective and open means of managing communications technology services that are*



streamlined, yet are sufficient to protect the character of the area.

Action 6.2.1: All decisions regarding the placement of communications technology facilities will be fair, will not discriminate between providers of functionally equivalent services, and will be addressed in reasonable time frame.

- a. The City Council will prepare and adopt clear guidelines, standards and time limitations for review of communications technology facilities.
- b. The City Council will act on requests to install communications technology infrastructure within a reasonable period of time after receipt of a complete application.

Goal 6.3: Use communications technology to maintain and enhance information resources and services provided to Kerrville citizens.

Objective A: Ensure equal opportunity to communications technology services for all residents of Kerrville.

Objective B: Provide training to Kerrville residents to develop the skills necessary to successfully take advantage of communications technology services.

Objective C: Utilize the Internet as an additional source of public information.

Objective D: Emphasize use of the Internet as a tool to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services.

Policy: *Utilize communications technology as an economic empowerment tool and quality of life resource.*

Action 6.3.1: Promote universal service and access for every Kerrville resident.

- a. Support equitable access to public information for all Kerrville citizens.
- b. Support affordable pricing for basic communications technology services for all consumers.
- c. Ensure that the City's annual budget has funds allocated to maintain and enhance the But-

Ensure funds to maintain and enhance the Library's access to the Internet.



Holdsworth Memorial Library's access to the Internet.

Action 6.3.2: Promote the opportunity for Kerrville citizens to acquire the appropriate skills to participate in a technologically advanced society.

- a. Work with the Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library to offer Internet training classes.
- b. Work with the Kerrville Independent School District where students can mentor adults.
- c. Promote life-long learning through the use of communications technology.
- d. Facilitate technical training and communications technology access for all Kerrville citizens.

Action 6.3.3: Use communications technology to provide public information to Kerrville citizens, businesses, industries and schools.

- a. Ensure that appropriate printed public information currently available to Kerrville citizens will remain free of charge in electronic form.
- b. Ensure that essential communications technology services are available on demand for the public interest.
- c. Utilize the City of Kerrville Web Page as a portal to the City government.

Action 6.3.4: Use communications technology to improve the City's efficiency and delivery of public services while reducing operating costs.

- a. Enhance Kerrville's ability to share public information through appropriate implementation of communications technology.
- b. Explore the potential use of telecommuting by City staff where appropriate and economically feasible.
- c. Implement projects which link the public with City staff and services including: on-line access to staff reports, electronic access to zoning and building codes and permit applications, and City statistics.

Provide reports, codes and regulations to residents via the Internet.

Goal 6.4: Use communications technology to enhance the lives of Kerrville residents.



Objective A: Build upon communications technology services as a source of public information and a means of education.

Objective B: Take advantage of existing federal and state resources to expand communications technology services.

Policy: *Acquire and utilize the resources necessary to allow communications technology services to support improvements in local quality of life, particularly for the young, disabled and elderly.*

Action 6.4.1: *Support the use of communications technology services to protect the property and lives of citizens*

- a. Foster advanced communications technology systems that support community-oriented information dissemination, library services, and educational services.
- b. Promote the use of communications technology to deliver learning services and resources beyond the classroom and library to Kerrville homes, organizations, and businesses.

Action 6.4.2: *Actively pursue grants and foundation funds to enhance the use of communications technology services among specific Kerrville residents such as elderly, economically disadvantaged, and persons with disabilities.*

- a. Seek out specific federal funds such as Technology Opportunities Program funds that are designed to assist with public and nonprofit communications technology services or Community Development Block Grant funds provided competitively through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.
- b. Research local, state and federal foundation resources for use in technology programs.

Seek out specific federal funds to assist with public and nonprofit communications technology services or Community Development Block Grant funds provided through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

Goal 6.5: Promote use of communications technology to enhance the economic vitality of Kerrville.

Objective A: Utilize communications technology services as a source of economic development and competitiveness.

Policy: *Establish Kerrville as a location that builds upon the possibilities provided by quality communications technology services.*



Action 6.5.1: Encourage Kerrville businesses and industries to leverage communications technologies to remain competitive.

- a. Encourage Kerrville businesses to use communications technology to achieve greater economic competitiveness.
- b. Where appropriate, recommend changes to City ordinances, requirements or procedures to enable communications technology advances.
- c. Promote communications technology services to encourage retention and relocation of businesses in Kerrville.
- d. Promote development of communications technology-based applications for teaching, learning, training, and retraining Kerrville's workforce.
- e. Seek the attraction of information-intensive businesses and point-of-sale operations in order to diversify the City's economic base and City revenues.

Goal 6.6: Facilitate the creation of an advanced communications network infrastructure for Kerrville citizens, businesses and industries.

Objective A: Promote local communications technology services as strength of the Kerrville community that offers an enhanced quality of life.

Objective B: Work cooperatively with public and private organizations to maximize efficiency and strength of the local communications technology network.

Objective C: Promote a fair, but competitive and innovative atmosphere in provision of communications technology services.

Policy: *Develop the appropriate network and infrastructure to continue to support "cutting-edge" communications technology systems.*

Action 6.6.1: Advertise that the Kerrville communications technology infrastructure is a reliable broadband interactive digital network that will provide



advanced services for its citizens, businesses, industries and schools.

- a. Promote the creation of a program to tout the City's support of its broadband, high-speed digital infrastructure that is available to all Kerrville citizens, businesses, industries, schools and agencies.
- b. Encourage development of communications technology infrastructure and investments to expand services available in Kerrville.
- c. Use interoperable open standards for the City's governmental communications technology equipment and services.
- d. Promote interoperability, efficient interconnection, and adherence to open industry standards for all elements to facilitate citywide connectivity.

Action 6.6.2: Promote interconnection and common carrier collaboration among Kerrville communications technology service providers and the City.

- a. Encourage infrastructure joint ventures to maximize the value of communications technology information to consumers.
- b. Support coordination of a shared common grid of communications technology systems for education, health care, public agencies, social services, justice and economic development.
- c. Seek opportunities for partnerships and collaborations with the private sector to obtain equity in the communications technology infrastructure to reduce City costs and improve municipal services.